

Appl. No. : 09/974,725
Filed : October 9, 2001

REMARKS

The foregoing amendments and the following remarks are responsive to the March 14, 2005 Office Action. Claims 1, 20, and 37 are amended, Claims 2-16, 18, 21-35, and 39 remain as originally filed, Claims 17, 19, 38, 40, and 41 are cancelled without prejudice, and Claim 49 remains as previously presented. Thus, Claims 1-16, 18, 20-35, 37, 39, and 49 are presented for further consideration. Please enter the amendments and reconsider the claims in view of the following remarks.

Written Statement Regarding Telephonic Interview with Examiner on March 28, 2005

Applicants thank Examiner Metzmeier for extending the courtesy of conducting a telephonic interview with Applicants' representative, Bruce S. Itchkawitz, on March 28, 2005. During the telephonic interview, the rejections of Claims 1-16 and 37 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as being indefinite were discussed. The amendments described herein are in accordance with the discussion during the telephonic interview.

Comments on Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for allowing Claim 49 and for acknowledging the allowability of Claims 1-16, 17-18, and 38-39. As discussed herein, Applicants have amended Claim 1 to include the limitations of Claim 17, have amended Claim 37 to include the limitations of Claim 38, and have cancelled Claims 17 and 38 without prejudice. Thus, amended Claim 1 includes all the limitations of Claim 17, which the Examiner indicated was allowable. In addition, amended Claim 37 includes all the limitations of Claim 38, which the Examiner indicated was allowable. Therefore, Applicants submit that amended Claims 1 and 37 are in condition for allowance.

Response to Rejection of Claims 1-16 and 37 Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

In the March 14, 2005 Office Action, the Examiner rejects Claims 1-16 and 37 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention.

While Applicants traverse the rejection of Claims 1-16 and 37, Applicants have amended Claims 1 and 37 as described herein to expedite allowance of these claims. Applicants submit that amended Claims 1 and 37 satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

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Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of Claims 1 and 37 and pass these claims to allowance.

Each of Claims 2, 4, 6, and 8-16 depends from amended Claim 1, Claim 3 depends from Claim 2, Claim 5 depends from Claim 4, and Claim 7 depends from Claim 6. Therefore, each of Claims 2-16 includes all the limitations of amended Claim 1, as well as other limitations of particular utility. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections of Claims 2-16 and pass these claims to allowance.

Response to Rejection of Claims 19-35 and 40-41 Under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b), 103(a)

In the March 14, 2005 Office Action, the Examiner rejects Claims 19-35 and 40-41 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,134,107 issued to Narula ("Narula"), or in the alternative, under §103(a) as being obvious over Narula.

As described herein, Applicants have cancelled Claims 19, 40, and 41 without prejudice, reserving the right to pursue allowance of these claims in a continuation application which claims priority to the present application. Applicants have also amended Claim 20 to depend from amended Claim 1.

As described herein, Applicants submit that amended Claim 1 is in condition for allowance. Each of Claims 20-25 and 35 depends from amended Claim 1, each of Claims 26-29 and 31-34 depends from Claim 25, and Claim 30 depends from Claim 29. Therefore, each of Claims 20-35 includes all the limitations of amended Claim 1, as well as other limitations of particular utility. Therefore, Applicants submit that Claims 20-35 are in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of Claims 20-35 and pass these claims to allowance.

Summary

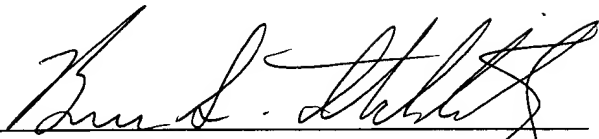
For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that Claims 1-16, 18, 20-35, 37, 39, and 49 are in condition for allowance, and Applicants respectfully request such action.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

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Respectfully submitted,

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